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GERMAN-POLISH RELATIONS

DANZIG—THE POLISH "CORRIDOR"—EAST PRUSSIA—UPPER SILESIA

THE Versailles settlement left many thorny problems in its wake, one of the most important of which was the adjustment of relations between Germany and her newly reconstituted eastern neighbor, Poland. The latter had been officially removed from the map of Europe by the Congress of Vienna in 1815, at a time when the spirit of intense nationalism was still too close to its infancy to be a power in international affairs. But by 1919 this spirit had become of the greatest importance. It made the actual working out of a settlement at the Paris Peace Conference between Germany and the new Poland extremely difficult, because of the geographical and ethnographical peculiarities of the border region and because of the complicated readjustments of such things as transportation, communications and trade routes necessitated by the century of tremendous economic development which lay between the Vienna and Versailles settlements.

During the first years after the war the problem of Polish-German relations occupied a prominent place on the international stage. But there were other difficult problems arising

out of the Versailles settlement and after 1922 the attention of the world, as well as the major attention of German public opinion, became focussed on Franco-German relations and the reparation question, while the question of Polish-German relations fell temporarily into abeyance. In January, 1923, France occupied the Ruhr, the value of the German mark sank lower and lower and finally, in 1924, the Dawes Plan was put in operation and Germany stabilized her currency. Side by side with these developments, negotiations for a security pact were going on which, in October, 1925, resulted in the Locarno Treaties. In September, 1926, Germany was finally admitted to the League of Nations and the Locarno settlement went into effect.

By the terms of the Locarno treaties, the western frontiers of Germany were stabilized and the possession of Alsace-Lorraine guaranteed to France. But the eastern frontiers were not guaranteed in the same way as those on the west, for at Locarno Germany and Poland signed an arbitration treaty for the peaceful settlement of all disputes except those "arising out of events

prior to the [arbitration] treaty and belonging to the past." Thus, since Locarno, public opinion in Germany has come to look upon the western settlement as a *fait accompli* and attention has more and more focussed on German-Polish relations and the readjustment—albeit by peaceful means—of the eastern frontiers. There are frequent indications in the press that Europe is turning increasing attention toward the problem of working out a *modus vivendi* in this region which will ease the tension and bad feeling and allow the harassed border peoples to live and work in peace.

This report attempts to explain the Versailles settlement in regard to Poland and Germany and to give some indication of how it has worked out. It is in no sense exhaustive. The details of the problems involved are so many and so complicated that often it has been impossible even to list them.

The matter presented is based as far as possible on official documents of the League of Nations and the official *History of the Peace Conference* by H. W. V. Temperley, rather than on publications emanating directly from Germany and Poland, for both feel so strongly that they have an excellent case to present that they have flooded the world with propaganda. Masses of German and Polish material are available, but statements of fact and statistical data diverge so widely that it has been almost impossible to make use of either German or Polish publications.

THE RECONSTITUTION OF POLAND

The Poles have always been a people noted for their national idealism and patriotism. Although in 1815 the Congress of Vienna had set its seal on the final partition of Po-

land between Germany, Austria and Russia, the Poles worked untiringly for the reestablishment of a free and united Poland. After half a century of plotting and insurrection, they recognized the futility of this means of recreating their country and devoted themselves to keeping Polish national feeling alive and building up the country economically.

It was this persistence which earned recognition of the Polish national aspirations by President Wilson in his thirteenth point, which reads as follows: "An independent Polish State should be erected which should include the territories inhabited by indisputably Polish populations, which should be assured a free and secure access to the sea, and whose political and economic independence and territorial integrity should be guaranteed by international covenant."

The Treaty of Versailles recreated an independent Poland at the expense of Russia, Austria and Germany, all of whom had participated in the three partitions of Poland in 1772, 1793 and 1795, and another chapter in the tangled history of Polish-German relations was begun.

By the treaty Poland received outright territory which had formerly comprised the greater part of the Prussian provinces of Posen and West Prussia, stretching from the northern boundary of Upper Silesia northward to the Baltic coast about 260 miles in length, with an average breadth of 80 miles. Its total population was just under 3,000,000, of which the Poles were reckoned at a figure just under 1,850,000.¹

The following table² shows in detail, according to provinces, the population figures of the territory ceded outright to Poland, and the principal religious affiliations of its inhabitants:³

	Total Population	Poles	Germans	Catholics (approx.)	Protestants (approx.)
West Prussia	913,000	528,000	385,000	57%	42%
East Prussia	25,000	15,000	10,000	25%	75%
Posnania (Posen) . .	1,955,000	1,273,000	682,000	75%	25%
Middle Silesia	38,000	28,000	10,000	40%	60%
Total	2,931,000	1,844,000	1,087,000		

¹Temperley, *History of the Peace Conference of Paris*, Vol. II, p. 207.

²Ibid., pp. 214-215. Temperley indicates that these figures are based on the 1910 German census.

³Most of the Germans are Protestants; the Poles, except for the Masurians in East Prussia are largely Catholic.



Prepared by the Foreign Policy Association.

The Peace Treaty in defining the eastern frontiers of Germany stipulated not only that the above territory be ceded to Poland, but also that certain sections should decide by

plebiscite to which state they wished to belong.

The population of the plebiscite areas is shown in the following table:¹

	Total Population	Poles	Germans	Catholics (approx.)	Protestants (approx.)
East Prussia	556,000	268,000	288,000	14%	85%
West Prussia	138,000	24,000	114,000	40%	60%
Middle Silesia	4,000	3,000	1,000	48%	52%
Upper Silesia	1,917,000	1,245,000	672,000	85%	15%
Total	2,615,000	1,540,000	1,075,000		

Two plebiscites were held in East Prussia, —one in the Marienwerder section, the other in the Allenstein area. Although the Marienwerder section had for centuries been admittedly German, the Poles wished to acquire it because the shortest railroad route between Danzig and Warsaw, via Mława, ran through it. Finally, to meet the Polish demands, the Peace Conference decided on a plebiscite to determine the wishes of the inhabitants. This was held on July 11, 1920 in the section between the railway and the Vistula River. The plebiscite resulted in 96,923 votes for union with East Prussia and 8,018 for union with Poland. Accordingly the whole area, with certain very slight modifications, was assigned to Germany.

The plebiscite held in the Allenstein *Regierungsbezirk* (section) affected an area of about 4,600 square miles with approximately 550,000 inhabitants, slightly more than half of whom were Masurian peasants. The voting took place on July 11, 1920. Returns showed that 363,209 votes had been cast for union with East Prussia and 7,980 for union with Poland. The entire area, with some insignificant modifications, was assigned to Germany.

The Silesian plebiscite was not held until March 20, 1921. Because of the number of issues involved, separate and fuller treatment is given the subject elsewhere in this study. (See p. 178).

Poland's access to the sea and a harbor for her use were assured by the Versailles Treaty through the cession by Germany of the city of Danzig together with a hinterland of about 700 square miles. This was con-

stituted a Free City under the protection of the League of Nations. The following table shows its population at the time of the cession.²

Poles	16,000	Catholics	38%
Germans	308,000	Protestants	61%
Total	324,000		

The chief points at issue between Poland and Germany may be grouped under the following heads: (1) Danzig; (2) the so-called Polish corridor; (3) the problem of the isolated province of East Prussia; (4) Upper Silesia.

Not only are the questions extraordinarily complicated, dealing as they do with a real "border population" composed of scattered settlements of Poles and scattered settlements of Germans, but there are, as well, mixed peoples who are neither wholly German nor wholly Polish, viz., the Kaschubs in West Prussia; the Masurians in East Prussia; and the mixed peoples in Upper Silesia who speak a dialect called "Water Polish" which the Poles say is an old Polish dialect of great purity. The Germans, inasmuch as Silesia has been under German, Bohemian or Austrian rule since the middle of the 14th century, also claim these people for their own.

The Poles, in the first flush of their newly recovered national sovereignty, are naturally extremely nationalistic and not inclined to be tolerant toward the large German minority within their borders. The Germans, on the other hand, are still smarting under the loss of considerable territory and of con-

¹Temperley, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 215.
²Idem.

siderable German population. Furthermore, it must not be forgotten that after 1886 the Government of Prussia engaged in an intensive campaign to Germanize the Polish parts of Prussia—Posen, West Prussia and Pomerania. The Poles in these sections, now that they are the masters, in their turn wish to Polonize the territory thoroughly and make life as hard as possible for its German inhabitants.

THE FREE CITY OF DANZIG

Wedge in between East Prussia and the Polish Corridor (see map, p. 171.) Danzig lies at the mouth of the Vistula River in an enviable commercial position. The city itself is a picturesque old Hansa town which was founded as a German settlement early in the thirteenth century. In 1308 it came under the rule of the Teutonic Knights, and in 1466 was united to Poland. However, the city had extensive rights of self-government, fought its own wars and signed its own peace treaties. In 1793, after the second partition of Poland, Danzig was joined to Prussia, and remained a part of that kingdom until after the Great War, except for the brief period from 1807 to 1814 when, under a Napoleonic edict, it became a free city.

Once more in 1919, when the Paris Peace Conference was faced with the difficult problem of providing the newly recreated Republic of Poland with access to the sea and a port on the Baltic, Danzig was constituted a free city. It was given a hinterland of about seven hundred square miles and placed under the League of Nations. Danzig's position at the mouth of the Vistula River, which drains one of the most important sections of Poland, suggested its inclusion in Polish territory. But the population of the city and its hinterland, even according to Polish statements, was 95 per cent German and the Conference, therefore, finally determined to detach Danzig from the Reich and give it the status of a free city. The League of Nations was given supervisory functions for the purpose of administering the area and guaranteeing to Poland certain rights and privileges.

The settlement may be summarized as follows:

1. A constitution of the Free City was

drawn up by a Constitutional Assembly of Danzigers and, after some amendment by the Council of the League of Nations, was agreed to by the League High Commissioner in Danzig on May 11, 1922. The constitution has been placed under the guarantee of the League of Nations.

It provides for a Popular Assembly (*Volks-tag*) of 120 members elected by popular vote for four years, and a Senate of twenty-two members, divided into two groups, elected by the *Volkstag*. The President and the seven principal Senators are elected for four years and act also as heads of administrative departments. The Vice-President and the remaining Senators are elected for an indefinite period, and are responsible to the *Volkstag* which elects them.

The Senate directs the policy of the government, and its President exercises general supervision over the work of the administration though he has no independent executive powers.

2. A High Commissioner appointed by the Council of the League of Nations resides in Danzig. He has power to settle disputes in the first instance, both parties retaining the right of appeal to the Council of the League. The expenses of the post are shared equally by the Danzig and Polish Governments.

3. A treaty between Poland and the Free City of Danzig, signed in Paris on November 9, 1920, amplified and extended by a supplementary treaty between the two states, which was signed in Warsaw on October 24, 1921, regulates their fundamental relationships. According to this treaty:

- (a) Poland undertakes to conduct the foreign relations of Danzig.
- (b) The Free City of Danzig is included within the Polish customs frontier; it forms one administrative unit under Danzig officials, although controlled by the Polish central customs administration, and receives a certain fixed percentage of the net receipts.
- (c) The "Danzig Port and Waterways Board" (usually called the Harbor Board) is composed of five Polish and five Danzig commissioners under the presidency of a Swiss. It operates the port, assuring to Poland the free use and service of its facilities, including railways and communications.
- (d) The other railways not under the Harbor Board, or serving primarily the needs of the

Free City, are controlled and administered by Poland.

- (e) Poland has the "right to establish in the port of Danzig a post, telegraph and telephone service communicating directly with Poland. Postal and telegraphic communications via the port of Danzig between Poland and foreign countries, as also communications between Poland and the port of Danzig," are dealt with by this service. "All other postal, telegraphic or telephonic communications within the territory of the Free City, as also communications between the Free City and foreign countries" are the concern of the Free City.
- (f) Danzig has undertaken to apply to racial, religious and linguistic minorities in its territory provisions similar to those applied by Poland in execution of the Polish minority treaty.
- (g) The 1920 Treaty provides for the eventual unification of the monetary systems of Poland and Danzig. Due to the financial difficulties of both Germany and Poland, Danzig, with the advice of the Financial Committee of the League, was forced to work out a currency reform which went into effect on January 1, 1924. The Free City now has a new unit of currency, the "gulden," which is equal to one twenty-fifth of the pound sterling, or approximately 19.3 cents.

The Danzig Constitution expressly provides that the Free City cannot, "without the previous consent of the League of Nations in each case: (1) serve as a military or naval base; (2) erect fortifications; (3) authorize the manufacture of munitions or war material on its territory."

In regard to the protection of the Free City by the League, the Council on June 22, 1921, adopted a comprehensive resolution recognizing the special fitness of the Polish Government to insure the defence of Danzig by land, if circumstances required it, as well as the maintenance of order within the Free City in the event of the local police forces proving insufficient. It provided, however, that the High Commissioner would normally request instructions from the League Council before taking action. Polish war vessels were allowed to anchor in the Danzig harbor and were provided with necessary berths by the Harbor Board.

The League High Commissioner has been called upon to decide a great number of disputes on many subjects between Poland and

Danzig. Between 1921 and 1926, the different High Commissioners there have handed down no less than 49 decisions on questions ranging from the right of Poland to retain a transport guard in the port of Danzig to the extent of Poland's right to conduct the foreign relations of the Free City. Many of these problems have been appealed to the League Council and thus thrown into the arena of international politics. One very serious dispute as to Poland's right under the Treaty to maintain a public postal service in the port of Danzig was finally referred by the League Council to the Permanent Court of International Justice for an advisory opinion on its legal aspects.

The problem of the Danzig railways proved to be an especially thorny one. The terms of the Treaty of Versailles and the Polish-Danzig Treaty of November 9, 1920 were by no means clear as to the disposition of the railways. After a great deal of negotiation between the Harbor Board, the Danzig and Polish Governments and the League Council and Secretariat, the High Commissioner finally divided the ownership of the standard-gauge lines between Poland and the Harbor Board and left the narrow-gauge lines and the tramways with the Free City. At the same time, he stipulated that the railways belonging to the Harbor Board should be administered by the Polish Railway Administration under very definite regulations and in general limited the freedom of the Polish administration so that the habits and customs of the Danzig population and the general authority of the Danzig Government would not be interfered with.

DANZIG-POLISH DISPUTES

The mutual irritations growing out of the new relationship between Poland and Danzig are traceable to both general and particular causes. The Danzigers accuse the Poles of intending eventually to annex the Free City outright and in the meantime of attempting to Polonize it. They themselves regard the Free City as a sovereign state while the Poles consider that the general recognition of their own right to have access to the sea gives them a greater degree of jurisdiction over

the Free City than its inhabitants are willing to admit. The Danzigers criticize hotly the Polish administration of the railways and their care of the important dykes on the Vistula on which the safety of the section is said to depend. The Poles say that the Danzigers put in their way every possible obstruction to the use of the port and that in general they are entirely non-cooperative. Mutual distrust and considerable hatred characterize all dealings between them.

Danzig's sudden transfer from the German to the Polish customs zone has been a particularly fruitful cause of trouble, for its commercial and industrial affiliations, due to its former political position as a part of Prussia, have long been with Berlin rather than with Warsaw. In spite of the fact that before the war Danzig had a considerable trade with that section of pre-war Russia which is now included in the Polish Republic, the readjustments consequent upon the 1919 arrangement have been far-reaching and distasteful to Danzig, and the financial difficulties experienced during the inflation of the German mark, the Polish mark and the Polish zloty have been very severe.

Danzig has the right to import, free of duty, certain quantities or so-called "contingents" of German goods for the Danzig market itself; *i. e.*, both for home consumption and for industrial production. Nevertheless, a German-Polish tariff war,¹ which has been going on since 1925, has had a bad effect on Danzig trade, partly because it has reduced purchasing power in Poland, and partly because it has prevented normal trade relations between Danzig and its German business connections. For various reasons, on the other hand, the movement of goods through Danzig has been augmented from time to time. When Poland's German market was closed because of the tariff war, for example, large exports of coal and timber were shipped out to new markets over Danzig. During the English coal strike, quantities of coal were shipped via Danzig to markets which are ordinarily supplied only with English coal. The result was that while in 1913 a monthly average of 78 ships cleared the Danzig harbor, the correspond-

ing average for the first five months of 1926 was 233. This increased export, however, did not bring any substantial relief to the grave unemployment situation in Danzig. Nor did it aid Danzig business, for coal contracts are generally negotiated directly between the Upper Silesian firms and the foreign purchaser, leaving no profit to the Danzig middleman.

A further grave source of friction between Poland and Danzig has been the question of effective storage and control of war material exported or imported through Danzig from Poland. The League Council first considered the problem early in 1921. In 1924 it accepted the recommendation of a neutral commission of inquiry that the Westerplatte peninsula, lying at the right of the mouth of the Vistula just across from the Danzig free harbor, be turned over to Poland for a munitions dump. The expense of constructing a harbor basin, docks, buildings, etc. was to be shared equally by the Polish and Danzig Governments. (See map, p. 171).

Though Poland alone is responsible for compensation for injury or damage in case of an explosion, the Danzigers naturally do not wish their free harbor to be blown up. Nor do they see any justification for the fact that they have had to bear half the building cost of the Westerplatte facilities constructed for the sole use of the Poles.

Furthermore, the fact that the Poles are building a large harbor and naval base of their own at Gdynia on the Baltic causes the Danzigers to inquire why the munitions dump was not located there. The Westerplatte peninsula was previously Danzig's most popular swimming resort and its loss is felt by all sections of the population.

THE POLISH "CORRIDOR"

The Danzig settlement gave Poland port facilities on the Baltic without actual possession of the Free City; in order to give the recreated Republic unrestricted access to the sea by water and rail, the narrow strip of land between Pomerania and Danzig, and Pomerania and East Prussia, with about ninety miles of sea-coast, was given outright

¹See p. 182.

to Poland. This territory contains the lower course of the Vistula River and the Warsaw-Thorn-Danzig railway system. In non-Polish circles it is usually referred to as the "Polish Corridor."

The ceded territory, which is a fertile agricultural district, has had a chequered history, comprising as it does most of the Prussian province of West Prussia, all of Posen and a tiny section of Middle Silesia. As early as 1309 the Teutonic Knights had seized West Prussia and Poland was completely cut off from the Baltic until 1466 when the northern province was reunited to it once more, although with extensive rights of self-government. Finally, in 1772, at the first partition of Poland, West Prussia was taken by Frederick the Great and remained a part of the Kingdom of Prussia until after the Versailles settlement. The province of Posen was seized by Prussia in 1793 at the second partition of Poland.

The population of the Corridor is very mixed. According to a German source, its population at the time of cession included 418,107 Germans, 438,769 Poles and 87,847 Kaschubs, the Germans thus comprising about 44 per cent of the total. According to a Polish source, only 19.6 per cent of the total population were German. The Kaschubs are a Slavic people, who speak a dialect fairly intelligible to the Poles, and like the latter they are Catholic. They are for the most part settled in the northwest corner of the Corridor.

The mixed character of the population has raised many difficult problems. The large landowners at the time of the cession were mostly German for, on account of the vigorous Germanization policy of Prussia before the war, it was difficult for Poles to own land. The available statistics of present ownership of land vary so widely according to their German or Polish source that it is impossible to give a fair picture of the situation. The Poles are frankly endeavoring to Polonize the district as fast as possible, but it is impossible to estimate in a report of this sort to what extent German landowners have been expropriated or German optants illegally expelled.

The Polish Government is constructing a naval port at Gdynia at tremendous cost, the complicated and difficult relationship between Danzig and Poland having motivated the desire for this thoroughly Polish port. Furthermore the Poles maintain that it was insufficient for the Treaty of Versailles to give them complete possession of a sea-coast without a port,—as in the case of the Corridor sea-coast,—and to provide access to a port without giving actual possession of it, as in the case of Danzig. These considerations, Poland holds, justify the great expenditure necessary to the construction of the new port. A Franco-Polish combine, representing the French firms of Batignolles, Hersent and Schneider & Co., is doing the work, which it is expected will be finished by 1930.

The Danzigers, cut off under the treaty from German shipping, are greatly alarmed by the development of Gdynia. They believe that the volume of Polish shipping does not now and will not in the future warrant the existence of two ports and fear that Danzig will lose its Polish trade, as it has already lost its German trade. Moreover, Gdynia is frankly a Polish naval base and in the event of war between Poland and another state, it might be a menace to Danzig, which, in spite of the fact that Poland is responsible for its foreign relations, feels itself always and under all conditions anti-Polish.

THE ISOLATION OF EAST PRUSSIA

The German province of East Prussia, completely cut off from the rest of Prussia by the Polish Corridor, is rather like an island in a Polish sea. This fact, together with the break-up of the old Russian Empire, has made its economic position very difficult. The province is somewhat less thickly settled than the rest of Germany and is composed of extensive forests and farm-land.

By the Versailles settlement East Prussia lost on the north a small section of territory north of the Nieman (Memel) River; in the southern part of the province a small area including the town of Soldau was given to Poland. A small section of West Prussia

with 267,645 inhabitants was incorporated into the province of East Prussia.

The Teutonic Knights had established themselves in East Prussia as early as the 13th century and assimilated the original peoples living there, who were largely fisher-folk of Latvian and Lithuanian descent—neither German nor Slav. The Knights held the province, part of the time as a fief of the Polish Crown, until about the middle of the 17th century, when the Great Elector annexed it to the Kingdom of Prussia.

The inhabitants of East Prussia, numbering approximately two and a half millions, are composed of Germans and Masurian peasants, the latter, according to Temperley,¹ comprising slightly more than half the population. The Masurians are of Slavic race, akin to the Poles, and speak a dialect which is somewhat like Polish; they are Protestant, however. The Masurians have been under German rule for centuries; their historical and religious affiliations are German while their racial and linguistic affiliations are Polish.

THE PROBLEM OF COMMUNICATION

The isolated position of East Prussia made necessary detailed provisions for transportation and communication across the Corridor between that province and the rest of Germany. Rail connection between them crosses the Corridor via Marienburg-Dirschau-Danzig-Boschpol; Marienburg-Dirschau-Schneidemühl; Deutsch Eylau-Thorn-Schneidemühl. (See map, p. 171.)

Travel between East Prussia and the Reich is not difficult in the privileged—or sealed—trains. Direct trains between Königsberg and Berlin run daily. But travel between Berlin and Danzig and Danzig and Königsberg is extraordinarily inconvenient. A Polish visa is necessary to reach Danzig by rail from Berlin or Königsberg and passengers must change trains at Marienburg or Dirschau or both. The customs formalities are many and very disagreeable. From Danzig to Königsberg, even for passengers travelling by airplane, visas are necessary

and customs inspection is very thorough. There is no direct rail connection between East Prussia and Upper Silesia.

Communication across the Corridor is regulated by a very long and detailed Convention between Germany and Poland and the Free City of Danzig, signed on April 21, 1921 at Paris. This Convention supplements Article 89 of the Treaty of Versailles. By its terms,—

1. Poland accords Germany "freedom of transit in respect of persons, goods, vessels, carriages, railway wagons, mails and telegraphic and telephone services, in transit between East Prussia and the rest of Germany over the territory (including territorial waters) ceded by Germany to Poland in virtue of the Treaty of Versailles."

The Free City of Danzig grants to Germany the same rights of transit across its territory.

2. Germany reciprocally gives to Poland and Danzig the same freedom of transit for communications over German (East Prussian) territory on the right bank of the Vistula River.

3. "Goods in transit are exempt from all customs or similar dues."

4. Traffic in transit is carried in the form of "privileged transit" or of "ordinary transit."

Goods and passengers in "privileged transit" are conveyed over certain specified lines in sealed trains reserved for this purpose, which are exempt from passport and customs formalities. Passengers making use of these trains are not entitled to deliver or receive any object whatsoever or to alight from the trains in the country through which they are passing.

5. A Permanent Tribunal of Arbitration, sitting in Danzig, is provided to settle all disputes as to the interpretation or application of the Convention which the High Contracting Parties may wish to refer to it.

6. Poland recognizes the obligation to forward by its own means, across the territory ceded to it by Germany, all traffic passing over the Polish system by rail between East Prussia and the rest of Germany. Danzig accepts the same obligation toward Germany and Germany in turn treats Polish-Danzig goods passing over East Prussia, in kind.

7. Special conditions are laid down for the transport of troops to and from East Prussia.

8. Direct mail service, parcel post, telephonic and telegraphic communication is provided for, as well as free navigation on all navigable waterways between East Prussia and the rest of Germany.

9. No passports are required for passengers using trains on the "privileged transit" service. Masters and crews of ships, however, and persons passing through the country of transit in motor cars or motor-cycles must have passports and a special visa.

Shipping by water between the Vistula and Oder Rivers through the Bromberg

¹Temperley, op. cit., Vol. VI, p. 249.

canal and the Netze River was a very important means of communication between East Prussia and the rest of Germany before the war. Today such shipping is practically non-existent, according to East Prussian authorities, for although the Paris Convention made provisions for the use of the waterways they have not proved practicable.

ECONOMIC SITUATION OF EAST PRUSSIA

East Prussia has lost from one-fourth to one-fifth of its markets through the cession of Posen and most of West Prussia to Poland. Furthermore, in spite of the provisions for through transit of goods and persons between East Prussia and the rest of Germany, the Corridor constitutes a sort of "mental hazard" for German business men, and German banks have been rather hesitant about extending credits to the Province.

Another factor contributing to the disruption of East Prussian trade has been the break-up of the former Russian Empire. Always an outpost of the Reich, East Prussia was able before the war to compensate for the high freight rates to western Germany by a lucrative trade in cheap Russian fodder, most of which was shipped to England. The ships on their return voyage brought cheap English coal for the use of East Prussian industries. Moreover, thanks to a particularly favorable tariff arrangement between Germany and Russia, Königsberg was before the war the center for the export of Russian lentils, grain, flax, hemp and oakum, as well as lumber, and in return sent herrings and animal produce to Russia. Now, however, the Russian lentil trade is only just beginning again; the cheap fodder trade has entirely ceased; wages are as high as in the rest of the Reich; the cost of living is high. The East Prussian lumber and paper industries have suffered greatly because of the impossibility, due to political conditions, of floating wood down the Niemen River.

THE UPPER SILESIAN PLEBISCITE

Probably no part of the Versailles settlement has caused more bad feeling between Poland and Germany than that dealing with

the province of Upper Silesia. The first draft of the Treaty of Versailles would have awarded the entire province, one of the richest and most important industrial areas of the Reich, to Poland. The German delegation at Paris protested strongly however, and in its final form the Treaty provided (Article 88) that in the major portion of Upper Silesia "the inhabitants would be called upon to indicate by a vote whether they wished to be attached to Germany or to Poland."

Until the plebiscite was held the area was provisionally governed by an International Commission representing France, Great Britain and Italy. The United States was expected to be represented also, but sent no one. The Commission was charged "to take all steps which it thought proper to ensure the freedom, fairness and secrecy of the vote. In particular it was to have the right to order the expulsion of any person who might have attempted to distort the result of the plebiscite by methods of corruption or intimidation." Unfortunately, however, the Commission does not seem to have been the dispassionate body contemplated by the treaty. The British representatives seem to have endeavored loyally to carry out the letter and spirit of their mandate, but the French championed the interests of the Poles, while the Italians contented themselves with a subordinate rôle, although supporting the British members for the most part. Both the Poles and the Germans conducted a furious propaganda and an unfortunate postponement of the plebiscite did not improve the situation. The Poles, in August, 1919, made a raid into certain sections of the province, and again in August, 1920, under General Korfanty, another Polish raid and insurrection took place with attendant terror and unrest. In May, 1921, after the plebiscite had been taken, General Korfanty led a third raid in an attempt to conquer Upper Silesia and present a *fait accompli* to the Supreme Allied Council in Paris, which at that very time was deliberating on the final delimitation of the Polish-German boundary.

Meanwhile the Germans in Upper Silesia were being encouraged by the ardent sympathy of their compatriots within the Reich,

where a vigorous propaganda was also being carried on.

The Germans argued that Upper Silesia had had no dealings with Poland for 600 years; that a province fertilized by the river Oder and its tributaries belonged geographically to Germany; that the industrial development of the province was due exclusively to German brains and German capital; that the Poles resident in Upper Silesia were mainly "Water-Poles," whose blood and speech were different from that of their cousins across the frontier; and that the mineral resources of the province were literally indispensable to the existence of the Reich, which had lost the iron of Lorraine, the coal of the Saar and had pledged itself to pay a huge sum of reparations.

The Poles argued that nearly two-thirds of the population of Upper Silesia was Polish; that the country had formed part of Poland in the Middle Ages; that it had belonged to Prussia only since the raid of Frederick the Great in 1745 (previous to that, from the 14th century onward, it had belonged to Bohemia and Austria in turn) and that the coal and other minerals of the province were even more urgently required by Poland than by Germany.

The plebiscite took place on March 20, 1921. Every man or woman over twenty who lived in the plebiscite area or had been born there was entitled to vote, and of the 1,220,514 citizens on the list, not less than 98 per cent responded, with the result that 707,605 votes were polled for Germany; 479,359 votes for Poland.¹

DIFFICULTY OF DELIMITING THE FRONTIER

The Treaty provided that on the conclusion of the voting the International Commission should inform the Principal Allied and Associated Powers as to the number of votes cast in each commune, and report on the manner in which the vote was taken. It was also to make recommendations as to the line which ought to be adopted as the frontier of Germany in Upper Silesia. In this rec-

ommendation regard would be paid to the wishes of the inhabitants, as shown by the vote, as well as to the geographical and economic situation of the locality.

These conditions seem clearly to have indicated partition of the territory and the result of the poll in the four zones of the area rendered it inevitable. In the north-west area there was a German majority of almost four to one; in the south a Polish majority of more than two to one; in the crowded "industrial basin," the heart of the mining district, a German majority of five to four; in the small district of the center, a Polish majority of five to four. It was of course most difficult to determine the allegiance of the mixed population of the third and fourth zones, which included the most valuable sections. Indeed the International Commission found a decision impossible. The French drew a line favoring the Poles which the British refused to approve and the British line was rejected by the French as unduly partial to the Germans. The Italians suggested a line between the two. Finally on August 12, 1921, the Allies, divided among themselves, referred the problem to the League of Nations and agreed to accept the latter's award in advance.

THE PROBLEM REFERRED TO THE LEAGUE

The Council referred it to representatives of Belgium, Spain, China and Brazil, who consulted a Czech and a Swiss on technical points. The Council's recommendation was announced on October 12, 1921, the line drawn through the industrial basin corresponding most closely to the earlier Italian proposal. The award was at once confirmed by the Council but was received with a storm of anger throughout Germany. The Germans argued that the decisive majority in the plebiscite warranted their retention of the whole province instead of the handing over of a considerable mining area to Poland, including some 350,000 Germans who had developed the district. However, the transition from the old to the new was peacefully effected and M. Calonder, a former President of the Swiss Confederation, was chosen

¹Temperley. *op. cit.*, Vol. VI, p. 620.

by the League as chairman of a mixed administrative commission of three, consisting of himself, a German and a Pole.

The boundary between German and Polish Upper Silesia, which was delimited under the terms of the League award, is an irregular line which divides the industrial area in amazing fashion. (See map, p. 171). In some places coal mines have been divided so that the shafts are on one side and the pits on the other; a zinc mine has the mine proper on one side, the plant to wash the zinc on the other. Iron foundries are cut off from their sources of supply; electrical systems, transportation systems, roads—all are cut by the new frontier. Even water works are divided—the water tower of the German city of Beuthen, for instance, being now in Poland.

By the partition Poland received 53 of the 67 coal-mines in Upper Silesia; of a coal output in 1920 of 31.7 million tons, it received 24.6 millions; of accumulated pit-head stocks totalling 60 million tons, it fell heir to 91.5 per cent; of the sixteen Upper Silesian zinc and lead mines in operation, with a total yearly output of 266,000 tons, Poland received eleven, with an output of 226,000 tons, which represented 70 per cent of the total German zinc output. Of 37 blast furnaces in Upper Silesia, 21 went to Poland; of 14 steel and rolling mills, Poland received 9. The partition also placed in Poland's possession all the zinc and lead foundries in the basin.¹

The full effects of the partition were not felt at once because the French occupation of the Ruhr, early in 1923, cut down the Ruhr coal output, and gave a larger market for coal from both Polish and German Upper Silesia. There was, however, a great depression in the basin during 1925 and the early part of 1926 when the Ruhr mines were working again. Then came the British coal strike in the spring of 1926, and again the Silesian mines on both sides of the line did a large business. Conditions there at the time of writing, however, especially on the Polish side of the boundary, are far from good.

THE UPPER SILESIAN CONVENTION

The division of the Upper Silesian industrial basin necessitated some sort of temporary arrangement to make possible the continuation of economic life in the district until permanent adjustments could be made.

After discussions lasting throughout the winter, a Convention between Germany and Poland was finally signed at Geneva on May 15, 1922, and ratified on June 3 at Oppeln. It is impossible in the space available to summarize the provisions of the Convention. Containing six hundred and six articles, it is longer, more technical and probably more complicated than the Treaty of Versailles itself. However, an adequate idea of its scope and purpose may be secured from the following recommendation of the League Council:

"To preserve, for a certain time, for the industries of the territory separated from Germany, their former markets, and to ensure the supplies of raw material and manufactured products which are indispensable to these industries; to avoid the economic disturbances which would be caused by the immediate substitution of the Polish mark for the German mark as the sole legal currency in the territory assigned to Poland; to prevent the working of the railways serving Upper Silesia from being affected by the shifting of the political frontier; to regulate the supplies of water and electricity; to maintain freedom of movement for individuals across the new frontier; to guarantee respect for private property; to guarantee, as far as possible, to the workers that they shall not lose, in the portion of territory assigned to Poland, the advantages which were secured them by German social legislation and by their Trade Union organization; and, finally, to ensure the protection of minorities upon the basis of an equitable reciprocity."

The Convention is to be in force for a period of fifteen years, *i. e.*, until 1937. Two permanent Polish-German organs have been set up to supervise its execution: the Upper Silesian Mixed Commission under the presidency of M. Calonder, and a Mixed Arbitral Tribunal, consisting of a Pole and a German, under M. v. Kaeckenbeeck, a Dutchman, to settle disputes between private German and Polish nationals arising out of the new regime. The Convention further provides that all disputes for the control of companies and in-

¹C. E. Ellington Wright in the *London Nation*, November 15, 1924.

dustrial or commercial enterprises are to be referred to the League Council, whose decision the two states agree to accept.

The principal provisions of the Convention deal with the liquidation of German property and interests in Polish Upper Silesia; nationality and domicile; rights of optants; protection of minorities; social questions (trade unions, employers' organizations, social insurance); economic questions (customs régime, freedom of intercourse, financial matters, coal and mineral products, water supply, electrical works, posts, telegraphs, telephones, railways).

The customs regime under the Upper Silesian Convention, which amplifies certain provisions of the Treaty of Versailles, insures the existence of virtual free trade between Polish and German Upper Silesia for a fifteen-year period. Moreover, the railways of the area are being administered as a single unit, under the control of a Common Superior Committee and of a Polish and German administration in their respective territories. Furthermore, during this period Poland must permit the exportation to Germany of the products of the mines in Polish Upper Silesia. Freedom of transit from one section of the area to the other is insured by the Convention, the inhabitants having identification cards which permit them to go back and forth across the frontier at will.

MINORITY PROBLEMS

By the partition of Upper Silesia a large Polish minority of approximately 572,000 remained under German rule and a large German minority of approximately 350,000 was transferred to Poland. The Germans in Polish Upper Silesia, besides mine workers, include many middle class workers as well as large industrialists and professional men. The Poles in the German section are mostly peasants and small farmers together with a few mine workers.

The Upper Silesian Convention contains detailed guarantees of the rights of both minorities and provides for the establishment of a minorities office in each territory to look after minority rights—a German

office in Poland and a Polish office in Germany. These offices may appeal to the Mixed Commission and, if still unsatisfied, to the League Council.

Elaborate regulations for use of language, freedom of religion, equality before the law, equal civil and political rights, and establishment of minority schools are laid down under the guarantee of the League of Nations. It is not within the province of this report to judge whether or not the regulations have been complied with by the signatories. Accusations as to their infringement are very numerous on both sides of the border; the Poles accuse the Germans of using economic pressure to force individuals to vote for German candidates; the Germans charge categorically that Polish industrialists discharge men in their employ who do not vote for Poles. For example, the Germans report that in the Communal elections in November, 1926, large numbers of employees in mines and iron works in Polish Upper Silesia who voted for candidates from the German minority were afterwards discharged through the agency of the Polish members of these firms. In German Upper Silesia similar stories are current among the Poles, who say the Polish tenants of German landowners lose their farms by voting for minority candidates.

Similar charges are made in connection with the vexed question of minority schools, which came before the March, 1927 meeting of the League Council. The Germans say that workers who send their children to the minority schools in Polish Upper Silesia are discharged or threatened with loss of work if they do not transfer them to the Polish schools. Similarly, the Poles in German Upper Silesia explain the fact that so few of their children attend the minority schools by saying that they would promptly lose their jobs if they sent the children to the Polish schools. Furthermore, the Germans charge the Poles with terrorization and intimidation and with endeavoring to Polonize the German minority in direct violation of the provisions of the minority treaty, while the Poles make much the same charges against the Germans in German Upper Silesia.

The difficulty of finding out what is going on in Upper Silesia is well exemplified by the returns of the communal elections of November, 1926 in Polish Upper Silesia, although even Polish figures seem to indicate a marked increase in the number of German votes in 1926 as compared with the previous election in 1922.

COMMUNAL ELECTION RESULTS

Polish Upper Silesia		
Election	Polish Figures	German Figures
1922	71% Polish
	29% German
1926	58% Polish	53.4% German
	42% German	46.6% Polish

Some German figures rate the German poll as high as 65 per cent but this discrepancy can be accounted for by the existence of the so-called *Kaustus Partei*, a provincial party which both Poles and Germans claim as their own.

PRESENT ISSUES BETWEEN GERMANY AND POLAND

The chief issues at the present time between Germany and Poland are two: injustice to minorities and economic difficulties. But through both these problems runs the red thread of purely political controversy aggravated by a sense of injustice at the entire eastern settlement on the part of Germany and by disappointment on the part of Poland because it did not get more.

The economic situation has become especially difficult because of the tariff war in which the two countries have been en-

gaged since June, 1925. The struggle was precipitated at that time by Germany's refusal to receive the 500,000 tons of coal a month from Polish Upper Silesia which it had agreed under the convention to take until June 15, 1925. Although Germany was legally within its rights, Poland at once retaliated by placing practically prohibitive tariffs on a long list of German products even though Poland itself was not in a position to produce substitutes. The Germans then retaliated by stopping the importation from Poland of naphtha, zinc-manufactured articles, sulphuric acid, coal and other products, for all of which Germany was the chief Polish market.

The following figures (Table I¹) illustrate the increase in Polish imports from Germany in the three years preceding the tariff war. Table II², Polish imports, taken from a different source shows that the tariff war drastically curtailed Polish imports from Germany in 1925 and 1926. Statistics of Polish imports from other countries are given for purposes of comparison. Table III gives the volume of Polish exports and imports for 1924, 1925 and 1926 and illustrates the drastic reduction in imports caused by the tariff war. The increase in exports was due largely to the British coal strike.

TABLE I
Polish Imports from Germany
(In millions of gold zlotys³)

Year	Imports from Germany	Per cent of total Polish Imports
1922	213	37
1923	487	43.6
1924	506	34.3

TABLE II
Polish Import Trade
(In millions of gold zlotys)

From	1924	Percentage of total	1925	Percentage of total	1926	Percentage of total
Germany	506	34.3	497	31	212	23.7
U. S. A.	164	11	219	13.6	156	17
Britain	110	7.4	128	7.9	93	10
Austria	173	11.7	154	9.6	61	6.8
Czechoslovakia	85	5.7	88	5.48	45	5

¹London *Economist*, July 11, 1925, p. 57.

²*Deutscher Volkswirt*, May 6, 1927, p. 996.

³Gold zloty equals 19.3 cents.

TABLE III¹
Polish Imports and Exports
(In millions of gold zlotys)

Year	Import	Export
1924	1478	1266
1925	1603	1272
1926	896	1306

Negotiations for a Polish-German commercial treaty have been under way for about four years but have been broken off again and again during this period and, owing to political difficulties on both sides, there seems no indication that they will be successful, at least in the near future. The tariff war has of course seriously retarded their progress. Moreover, the advent of the Nationalists in the German Cabinet in January, 1927 has made the negotiation of a treaty acceptable to both countries even more difficult. The items of Polish export which, next to coal, have caused the greatest discussion between the two countries have been agricultural products, notably pigs and potatoes. The German Nationalists, representing primarily the large German landowners, are adamant against allowing Polish pigs or potatoes to enter the Reich.

Fully as difficult as these economic problems have been the problems relating to the minority populations of Poland and Upper Silesia. A special treaty between Poland and the Principal Allied Powers was signed simultaneously with the Treaty of Versailles on June 28, 1919, guaranteeing to German minorities in Poland full protection of their legal, civil and personal rights. Many of the provisions of this treaty were incorporated *in toto* into the Upper Silesian Convention already described, to which both Poland and Germany were parties. Both countries, however, have charged each other with gross violation of the minorities agreements, and there have been many appeals to the League of Nations on this score. Feeling on both sides of the frontier runs high.

The situation is further complicated by the fact that the grave problem of the free right of settlement for Germans in Po-

land is very far from being satisfactorily adjusted and by the further fact that the question of transit from Germany through Poland to Russia also remains unsettled.

The League of Nations is not the only outside body to which questions from this troubled area have been referred. The Permanent Court of International Justice has already been called upon to render three judgments and three advisory opinions on Polish-German matters and a fourth judgment is pending. Up to the present, the Permanent Court has decided a case concerning shipment of munitions to Poland via Danzig through the Kiel Canal² and two cases dealing with German interests and in Polish Upper Silesia.³ The case at present before the court also concerns this subject.

At the request of the League Council, the Court has given advisory opinions concerning protection of German settlers in Poland,⁴ acquisition of Polish nationality by German settlers,⁵ and the Polish postal service in the Free City of Danzig.⁶

PUBLIC OPINION AND GERMAN-POLISH RELATIONS

There are three broad viewpoints in regard to German-Polish relations; that of the Germans, that of the Poles and that of the League of Nations. In general it may be said that the Germans look at the delimitation of their eastern frontiers as capable of revision by peaceful means, while the Poles are determined at all costs to keep and solidify what they have. The League views post-war Europe without Poland as an impossibility and is concerned in helping Germany and Poland to work out a *modus vivendi* on this basis.

In Germany, opinion varies according to party affiliation. The Nationalists view the entire settlement as an insult to Germany's national honor. They have an economic interest in keeping out Polish agricultural products and, as the successors of

¹Judgment number 1, August 17, 1923.

²Judgment number 6, August 25, 1925; Judgment number 7, May 25, 1926.

³Advisory Opinion number 6, September 10, 1923.

⁴Advisory Opinion number 7, September 15, 1923.

⁵Advisory Opinion number 11, February 21, 1925.

¹*Deutscher Volkswirt*, May 6, 1927, p. 996.

the old Conservative Party, were reared in the tradition of old Prussia with its pre-war policy of political extermination of the Poles. Moreover, since Locarno, they have lost one traditional enemy—the French—and have therefore turned their attention to the Poles. The People's Party under the leadership of Foreign Minister Stresemann, though strongly nationalist, is much less intransigent. Its members are largely industrialists who are anxious to have a commercial treaty with the Poles. The position of the Catholic Center party is not clear, although its official organ, *Germania*, can hardly be called anti-Polish. Representing as it does an economic cross-section of the Reich, the Center's stand is always difficult to define, but should not be classified as intransigent. The Democrats are divided. Some of them, believing that Poland is strongly anti-Semitic, are unfriendly; others are working very hard for a *rap-*

prochement with Poland. Though some Social Democrats distrust the labor policy of Poland, the majority favor German-Polish understanding.

In Poland, the political situation is so complex that it is impossible to go into detail except to say that the Polish Nationalists are very anti-German while the Socialists are in favor of an understanding with their neighbors.

There have been unofficial moves in both Poland and Germany, conferences and conversations, looking toward better relationship. In the meantime, the League of Nations and the Permanent Court remain the sole bodies to which both sides can look for adjustment of their difficulties. Geneva at least affords them a public platform on which to air their grievances and a meeting place where German and Polish officials can try to solve the many vexed problems at issue between them.

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